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SNIE 11-8-57  
18 September 1957

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**SPECIAL**  
**NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE**

**NUMBER 11-8-57**

**EVALUATION OF EVIDENCE CONCERNING SOVIET**  
**ICBM FLIGHT TESTS**

Submitted by the

**DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE**

The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of this estimate: The Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, The Joint Staff, and the Atomic Energy Commission.

Concurred in by the

**INTELLIGENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

on 18 September 1957. Concurring were the Special Assistant, Intelligence, Department of State; the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence; Department of the Army; the Director of Naval Intelligence; the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF; the Deputy Director for Intelligence, The Joint Staff; and the Atomic Energy Commission Representative to the IAC. The Assistant Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, abstained, the subject being outside of his jurisdiction.

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SNIE 11-8-57EVALUATION OF EVIDENCE CONCERNING SOVIET  
ICBM FLIGHT TESTSCONCLUSIONS

1. The USSR has probably flight-tested two intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) vehicles, the first on 21 August 1957 and the second on 7 September 1957.

2. We believe the USSR has the capability to perform such tests. [redacted] activities on the new Tyura Tam-Klyuchi range [redacted] supports the Soviet statements concerning ICBM flight tests. We have no evidence as to the range, accuracy, or character of the vehicles fired, apart from that in the Soviet statements and that which may be inferred from the 3,500-nautical-mile length of the test range.

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DISCUSSION

3. The USSR is known to have flight-tested at least 275 ballistic missiles to ranges of about 75, 150, 300, 650 and 950 nautical miles on the Kapustin Yar range since mid-1953, including seven tests to a range of approximately 950 nautical miles since 22 June 1957, and two probable multistage tests in May 1957. The USSR has acquired considerable ballistic missile experience from this extensive test program, and probably has flight-tested ICBM components. This base of acquired technical knowledge and the high probability that the USSR has attached a very high priority to the ICBM leads us to estimate that the USSR is now capable of initiating an ICBM flight-test program.

4. Construction activity began in mid-1955 on a new ballistic missile test range of about 3,500 nautical miles length

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between Tyura Tam and Klyuchi (see Map). [redacted]

[redacted] this range was approaching operational readiness in the spring of 1957, and we believe that by mid-August 1957 it could have supported limited missile flight testing.

5. Since the late spring of 1957, both Tyura Tam and Klyuchi have been involved in [redacted]

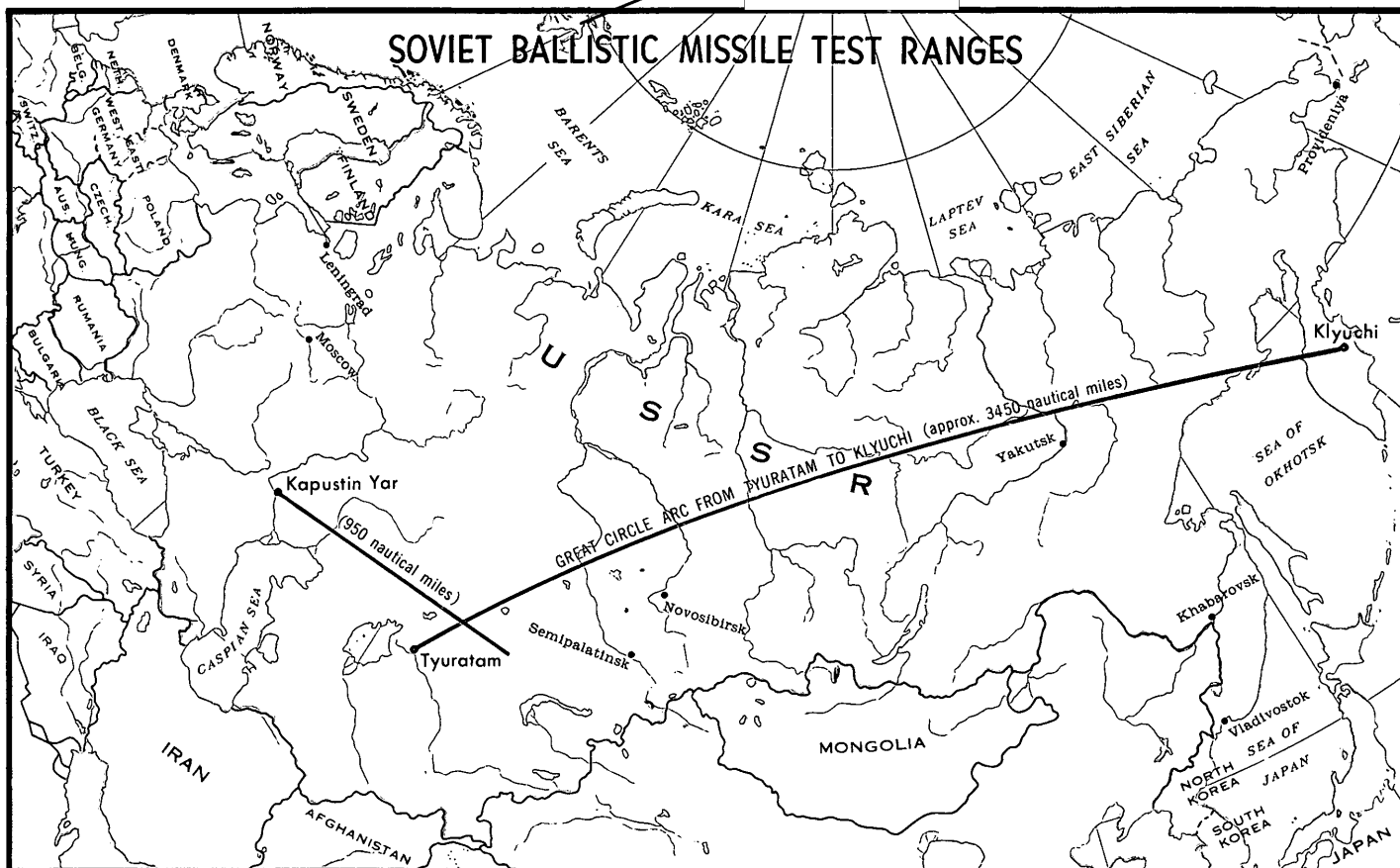
[redacted] activity. [redacted]

[redacted] activity detected on the new range was sufficient to indicate that missile flight tests could have occurred [redacted]

6. On 26 August 1957, the official Soviet news agency, TASS, stated that "a super long-distance intercontinental multistage ballistic rocket was launched a few days ago. The tests of the rocket were successful.... The rocket flew at a very high, unprecedented altitude, covering a huge distance.... The rocket landed in the target area." On 9 September 1957, Khrushchev told Edouard Daladier in Yalta that on 7 September he had personally witnessed the second successful trial of an intercontinental missile. While the TASS announcement may have been timed for maximum propaganda effect, past Soviet statements of this type have generally been based on actual performance or assured capability.

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